

Message Text

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15

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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R 191005Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2982

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0228

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: LIBYA: POLICE-ARMY RELATIONS

1. A STRANGELY FORMAL EXCHANGE OF COMPLIMENTS HAS TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN QADHAFI'S POLICE CHIEF, MINISTER OF INTERIOR AL-HUMAYDI, AND HIS ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, LT. COL. YUNIS. THE OCCASION WAS THE DEDICATION OF A POLICE ACADEMY FEBRUARY 16, WHICH YUNIS ATTENDED, AND AT WHICH HE WAS PRESENTED BY HUMAYDI WITH A GOLD PLATE TO SYMBOLIZE THE WISH OF THE POLICE TO COOPERATE WITH ARMY. THE NEXT DAY, YUNIS RESPONDED BY EXPRESSING HIS CONFIDENCE THAT THE POLICE WOULD RISE TO THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

2. THE RATHER UN-LIBYAN CEREMONIOUSNESS IS PROBABLY INTENDED TO COUNTER RUMORS THAT THE POLICE ARE BEING STRENGTHENED AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ARMY AS AN INTERNAL SECURITY FORCE. THE MONARCHY, OF COURSE, USED THE PARA-MILITARY CYRENAICA DEFENSE FORCE IN THIS WAY, AND THIS WAS A SORE SUBJECT WITH THE ARMY BEFORE THE REVOLUTION. IN RECENT WEEKS' POLICE AT SENSITIVE POINTS HAVE BEEN ARMED WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS, A DEVELOPMENT QADHAFI HAS RESISTED IN THE PAST, BUT WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN FORCED ON HIM BY THE JANUARY STUDENT VIOLENCE IN BENGHAZI, WHEN THE POLICE REPORTEDLY TOOK MOST OF THE CASUALITIES.

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3. THE POLICE ACADEMY DEDICATION HAD A BIZARRE SIDE-

LIGHT. SOME OF THE NEW RECRUITS, WHO ARE COUNTRY BOYS
FOR THE MOST PART, APPARENTLY GOT CARRIED AWAY AND BEGAN TO
EXPRESS THEMSELVES IN THE TRADITIONAL BEDOUIN MANNER BY
FIRING THEIR WEAPONS INTO THE SKY. WE ARE STILL NOT
SURE JUST WHAT HAPPENED, BUT FOR A FEW MINUTES THE EVENING SKY OVER

TRIPOLI WAS LIT WITH BURSTS OF FIRE, INCLUDING
MACHINE GUN TRACERS. THE EXCITEMENT WAS OVER IN A FEW MINUTES,
AND THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME SHEEPISH FACES IN THE
MORNING.
CARLE

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NNN

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